

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT GW

SUBJECT: ELECTION OF ERNST ALBRECHT AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT
OF LOWER SAXONY

1. IT HAS BEEN NO SECRET IN HANNOVER FOR THE PAST YEAR
THAT SPD MINISTER-PRESIDENT ALFRED KUBEL OF LOWER SAXONY
HAS BEGUN TO FEEL HIS 67 YEARS AND HAS BEEN AWAITING A
PROPITIOUS TIME TO STEP ASIDE SO AS TO ALLOW A YOUNGER
MAN TO ASSUME THE OFFICE OF MINISTER-PRESIDENT OF LAND
NIEDERSACHSEN. KUBEL, A MEMBER OF THE CONSERVATIVE WING
OF THE SPD, HAS BEEN AN EFFECTIVE MINISTER-PRESIDENT AND
DURING HIS TENURE SINCE 1970 HAS ENJOYED EXCELLENT WORKING
RELATIONS WITH THE MULTI-NATIONAL COMPANIES BASED IN LOWER
SAXONY.

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2. IN MAY 1975 KUBEL FORMALLY ANNOUNCED HIS INTENTION TO

RETIRE SOMETIME AT THE BEGINNING OF 1976 AND ON JANUARY 7, 1976 TENDERED HIS RESIGNATION TO BECOME EFFECTIVE JANUARY 14. AT A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE LANDTAG IN HANNOVER ON JANUARY 14 HELMUT KASIMIER, SPD, THE 49-YEAR OLD MINISTER OF FINANCE, WHO WAS THE SPD/FDP COALITION CANDIDATE TO SUCCEED KUBEL FAILED TO RECEIVE THE 78 VOTE MAJORITY NECESSARY FOR HIS ELECTION AS MINISTER-PRESIDENT (76 SPD, 11 FDP, 77 CDU - 155 LANDTAG DEPUTIES). THREE DEPUTIES WHOSE IDENTITY IS UNKNOWN BECAUSE OF THE SECRET BALLOT, CAST VOID BALLOTS.

3. ON JANUARY 15, AT A SECOND ELECTION, ERNST ALBRECHT, A 45-YEAR OLD CDU LANDTAG DEPUTY WHO RAN AGAINST KASIMIER RECEIVED THE UNEXPECTED SUPPORT OF ONE MEMBER OF THE SPD/FDP COALITION AND DEFEATED KASIMIER IN A STUNNING UPSET.

4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS DRAMATIC ELECTORAL VICTORY FOR THE CDU IN LOWER SAXONY IS THAT IT CHANGES THE COMPOSITION OF THE BUNDESRAT. THE CDU WILL NOW RECEIVE 5 ADDITIONAL SEATS, THEREBY WIDENING ITS GAP IN THE BUNDESRAT TO 26 SEATS FOR THE CDU AS AGAINST 15 SEATS FOR THE SPD/FDP MINORITY IN THE UPPER HOUSE OF THE FEDERAL PARLIAMENT.

5. AT THE EARLIEST OPPORTUNITY I WILL BE MEETING WITH ALBRECHT AND WILL THEN REPORT HIS VIEWS ON POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC MATTERS, PARTICULARLY THOSE AFFECTING THE FORTHCOMING OCTOBER 1976 BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS IN LOWER SAXONY. BROGAN

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